Love Hurts by bromntide

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After the Snowball of '84, Will Byers returns home, dejected, thinking about the person he likes, and how they could never feel the same way about him.

Love Hurts

Author's Note:

> This was based around a hc I got from a discord server I'm in, so I hope you enjoy! For reference, the song is "Love Hurts" by Nazareth.

“Can you take me home?”

Joyce spun around to see Will, looking small and honestly, sad, fiddling with his fingers.

“Sure,” Joyce said. “But what about the party at Mike’s?”

“I don’t feel like going,” Will said shortly. “Kind of all partied out.”

Joyce eyed her son worriedly. “Okay, sweetie. If there’s something wrong, you know you can-“

“I can tell you,” Will finished, pulling the passenger door open. “I know, mom.”

Joyce smiled and climbed into the car. The drive home was silent, aside from a few sniffles from Will. Joyce glanced to the side, looking at her son. There were no tears, that was good. Will just looked tired, which was understandable. After a few more minutes of driving, they pulled up to their house. Before his mother could say anything to him, Will got out of the car and made his way to his room, closing the door after him.

What was wrong with him? Will stared at his bed, struggling to push his emotions down. Mike is his best friend, Will should be happy that he’s back with Eleven, that they’re happy together but… Will groaned in frustration and sat on his bed, pushing his face into his hands. It wasn’t because he liked Mike, was it? That’d be ridiculous, Mike was just his best friend… wasn’t he?

Love hurts.

Will looked up. The sound of music was coming from the front room.

Had his mom turned on the radio?

Love scars.

With shaky hands, Will reached over to his own stereo and switched it on, flicking through the stations until he recognized the song.

Love wounds, and marks any heart.

Will felt his chest tighten. He reached up and grabbed his shirt directly over his heart, breathing softly.

Not tough or strong enough

To take a lot of pain, take a lot of pain.

Will bit his lip, closing his eyes and thinking back on watching Mike and El dancing just a few hours earlier.

Love is like a cloud

Holds a lot of rain

Love hurts……ooh, ooh love hurts.

He thought of the way Mike looked at her, his eyes soft, and full of love for the girl dancing in front of him. *I wish he'd look at me like that,* Will wished in his mind, and he stood, tears forming at the corners of his eyes, walking over to his desk and shakily pulling a piece of paper from his sketchbook.

I'm young, I know, but even so

I know a thing or two

And I learned from you.

Will's hands moved as he imagined that he was El, his arms around Mike's neck, Mike's hands at his waist, his eyes glowing and his lips slightly parted.

I really learned a lot, really learned a lot

Love is like a flame

It burns you when it's hot.

Tears were flowing freely now, because as Will finished his drawing, he left the scene he had imagined. He wasn't Eleven, he was just Will. Not someone Mike would care for, not like that. All Mike saw him as was a friend, nothing more, and for some stupid reason, that broke his heart.

Some fools think of happiness

Blissfulness, togetherness.

Joyce listened at Will's door, hearing the soft music pulse from her son's radio. She wanted to help him, she knew something was wrong, but after everything that had happened, she knew he just felt suffocated by all the help people were trying to give him.

Some fools fool themselves I guess

They're not foolin' me.

Joyce decided to enter the room once she heard a broken sob just barely louder than the music. Pushing the door open, she saw Will hunched over his desk, his shoulders shaking.

"Sweetie, what's wrong?" She asked with a shaky voice, rushing to her son's side.

Will sat up at the sound of his mother's voice, wiping away his tears and shoving the drawing off to the side. "Nothing. It's stupid."

I know it isn't true, I know it isn't true

Love is just a lie.

Joyce clicked her tongue. "It's not stupid. Is it about…" she paused, not wanting to bring it up, but… "is it about the Upside Down?"

Will shook his head. "No, no. It was about the dance. I told you, it's stupid."

Joyce smiled softly. “Hey, if it’s because some girl didn’t want to dance with you or something, that doesn’t make it then of the world!”

Made to make you blue

Love hurts……ooh, ooh love hurts.

“It’s not ‘some girl’, mom,” Will said weakly, gesturing towards the paper he’d pushed to the side when Joyce had entered the room.

Joyce reached over and picked up the drawing, staring at it. On the paper was a rough sketch, but Joyce could tell who it was. It was Mike Wheeler, staring forward with a happy smile on his face, his eyes sparkling.

“Oh, baby…” Joyce whispered. “Do you like Mike?”

Will let out a strangled sob and fell into his mother’s chest. Joyce wrapped her arms around Will, holding him close.

“I hate this, mom,” Will cried. “I wish I was her, I like him so much, I just… I wish I was her!”

Joyce pressed a kiss to the top of Will’s head, her heart breaking for her son. And there wasn’t a thing she could do for him.

Ooh, ooh love hurts.